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ABSTRACT

The keynote speaker at this conference reviewed the ways to overcome the separation between humanists and what is conceived to be the real world. Humanists must not only foster greater appreciation of the arts and expose people to the background of human culture, but engage in direct interaction with critical issues and long-term social choices. This will enhance life and increase the chances of survival. Results and conclusions of conference discussion groups are presented for the following topics: Different and Valid Approaches to Teaching the Humanities--What Are They?; Can or Should Morality Be Taught in the Humanities?; Should the Humanities Be Popularized?; What Kind of Humanities Courses Should Be Offered for Non-Transfer Students?; What Problems Are There in Communicating the Humanities, and How Can They Be Solved?; How Can the Humanities and Vocational-Technical Education Co-Exist?; What Is the Status of Humanities Courses for Ethnic Minorities and Women?; and What New Directions Will and Should the Humanities Take? In a special report, a new approach to general education is presented which allows students to choose a set of goals (basic skills, political awareness, etc.) for which a list of courses has been developed. (MJK)

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THE FUTURE OF THE HUMANITIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

a one-day conference at

BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE

April 4, 1975

IN CO-OPERATION WITH
THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

A SUMMARY OF WHAT OCCURRED

prepared by
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JC 750 455

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CONFERENCE DIRECTOR'S FOREWARD

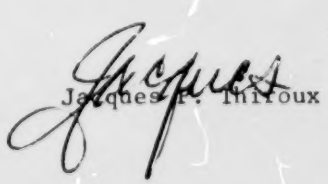
What follows is a loosely, yet respectfully assembled collection of most of what went on at the humanities conference held at Bakersfield College on April 4, 1975.

I say "most" because, unfortunately the discussion question, "Are Behavioristic Goals and Objectives Applicable to the Humanities?", is not included here and some discussion questions are presented in much less depth than others. This is basically due to inadequate taping of several discussion groups for which I take full responsibility.

I hope, however, that what is presented, which I feel is quite substantial, will be of value to all who read it. I tried very hard to present ideas, discussion, and issues as they arose and actually occurred during the group sessions; and only interfered by personally commenting about three times. These comments are clearly listed and are put in the form of questions rather than dogmatic statements, so I hope you won't object to them too much.

As I reviewed the conference in preparing this summary, I am on the whole satisfied that the conference was significant, meaningful, and useful to all of us. As in most conferences, discussion questions were not completely answered to everyone's satisfaction, but important issues were raised and meaningfully discussed to the extent that I feel we can all possibly improve and enrich our thinking and thereby our teaching of whatever humanities courses we offer at our various schools.

I truly feel that the summaries of the sessions speak for themselves and so I will not summarize further here. I wish to thank all who helped with the conference--all my fellow Bakersfield College faculty members and its administrators and all discussion group leaders and participants; but especially the following, whose own summaries of their specific groups appear in this report: Beverly Palmer, Chaffey College; John Tufft, Taft College; John Williamson, Reedley College; Michael Anker, Contra Costa College; Ron Dethlefson, Bakersfield College; and Bernice Zelditch, Foothill College. Special mention must also be given to Roger Johnson, Bakersfield College Food Services Supervisor, whose excellent lunch was certainly a high point of the conference. Lastly, a special thanks to Bruce Sievers whose keynote speech was extremely inspiring to all of us and who was kind enough to participate in the entire conference.



Jacques E. Thiroux

THE FUTURE OF THE HUMANITIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

a one-day conference at

BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE

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PROGRAM

9:00	Registration and Coffee
9:30	Guest Speaker--Bruce Sievers-Executive Director, California Council for the Humanities in Public Policy
10:00	Discussion Groups
	I - Different approaches in teaching humanities.
	II - Are behavioristic goals and objectives applicable to the humanities?
	III - Should morality be taught in the humanities?
	COFFEE BREAK
11:00	Discussion Groups
	I - Should humanities be popularized?
	II - Courses for non-transfer students.
	III - Problems in communicating the humanities.
12:45	LUNCH
1:30	Discussion Groups
	I - New directions for humanities.
	II - Humanities and vocational technical education.
	III - Courses for Ethnic minorities and women.
2:45	Conference Summary

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HUMANITIES CONFERENCE
April 4, 1975
Bakersfield College
The Future of the Humanities in the Community College
SCHEDULE OF DAY'S EVENTS

9:00 A. M. Fireside Room - Registration and Coffee and Donuts
9:30 A. M. Forum West - Welcome, Dr. James Chadbourne, Dean of Instruction, Bakersfield College
9:33 A. M. Introduction of Guest Speaker by Jacques Thiroux, Chairman, Dept. of Philosophy and Conference Director
9:35 A. M. Guest Speaker - Bruce Sievers, Executive Director, California Council for the Humanities in Public Policy - "Relevance and Importance of the Humanities".
10:00 A. M. FIRST DISCUSSION PERIOD

Group I, Language Arts Room 113: Different and Valid Approaches in Teaching the Humanities--What Are They?
Discussion leaders:
Len Epstein, Monterey Peninsula College
Lawrence Moorman, Yuba College
Beverly Palmer, Chaffey College

Group II, Language Arts Room 110: Are Behavioristic Goals and Objectives Applicable to the Humanities?
Discussion leaders:
H. Platzer, Rio Hondo College
John Tufft, Taft College
Jim Fletcher, Skyline College

Group III, Language Arts Room 114: Can or Should Morality Be Taught in the Humanities? If not, why not? If so, how?
Discussion leaders:
John Williamson, Reedley College
Vincent Barry, Bakersfield College

11:00 A. M. Short Coffee and Donut Break
11:15 A. M. SECOND DISCUSSION PERIOD

Group IV, LA Room 113: Should the Humanities Be Popularized? If so, how and to what degree? If not, why not?
Discussion leaders:
Lawrence Moorman, Yuba College
John Williamson, Reedley College

Group V, LA Room 110: What Kind of Humanities Courses Should Be Offered for Non-transfer Students?
Discussion leaders:
H. Platzer, Rio Hondo College
John Tufft, Taft College
Michael Anker, Contra-Costa College

Group VI, LA Room 114: What Problems Are There in Communicating the Humanities, and How Can They Be Solved?
Discussion leaders:
Beverly Palmer, Chaffey College
Ron Dethlefson, Bakersfield College

Schedule of Day's Events, cont'd

12:15 P. M. Short Pre-Lunch Break
12:30 P. M. Lunch in Dining Room Directly Behind Fireside Room
1:30 P. M. THIRD DISCUSSION PERIOD

Group VII, LA 113: What New Directions Will and Should the Humanities Take?
Discussion leaders:
Lawrence Moorman, Yuba College
Jim Fletcher, Skyline College

Group VII, LA 110: How Can the Humanities and Vocational-Technical Education Co-exist?
Discussion leaders:
H. Platzer, Rio Hondo College
John Tufft, Taft College
Michael Anker, Contra-Costa College
Dorothy Mellor, Bakersfield College

Group IX, LA 114: What is the Status of Humanities Courses for Ethnic Minorities and Women?
Discussion leaders:
Bernice Zelditch, Foothill College
Others from Bakersfield College to be announced later

2:30 P. M. Forum West - Conclusions from all groups and summary of conference--chaired by Bruce Sievers.
3:30 P. M. Conference ends.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

1. What do the key terms or phrases under discussion mean and include (e. g., "humanities," "behavioristic goals and objectives," "popularized," "non-transfer," etc.). Let's strive to get at these quickly, say within the first 5-10 minutes of the hour.

2. What are the main issues or problems surrounding the topic under discussion?

   FOR EXAMPLE:
   A. Are we trying to affect behavior in the humanities? If so, in what way? Are goals and objectives appropriate, then?
   B. Should the humanities be made relevant to today?
   C. Should we let vocational-technical education "do its thing" and humanities "do its thing" separately, or should there be some interaction between the two areas? What kind of interaction, if any?
   D. (Suggested time, 10-15 minutes).

3. What methods or approaches are presently being used to deal with the issues or solve the problems?
   (NOTE: Please be brief. Let's not be overpoweringly ethnocentric about "what's being done at our school," but let's do get the ideas out).
   (Suggested time, 15-20 minutes).

4. What new methods or approaches have we come up with during this discussion, and what suggestions can we give all community colleges to assist them in resolving the issues and problems in this area? (Suggested time, 15-20 minutes).

Keynote Speech by Dr. Bruce R. Sievers, Executive Director,
California Council for the Humanities in Public Policy

I was delighted to accept the invitation to speak at this conference -- when I heard it was to be on the "Future of the Humanities in the Community College" -- for two reasons: One commendable, one conniving.

The first is that I firmly believe the future of the humanities (and particularly the humanities in the community college) is inextricably bound up with the thrust of the program with which I am now involved and about which I want to talk at a later point. The second is that, although I realize that a major focus of this conference is also on new approaches to humanities in the classroom, I hope to inveigle you away from those musty corridors out into the sunlight of public involvement.

As I was considering the conference topic, an old adage came to mind attributed to an English lord, but it might as well have been an American professor who said, "I thank God for my Oxford education, which taught me to despise the wealth it prevented me from making."

There is a kernel of truth here which says something about the present condition of the humanities and possibly even more about their future. It might in fact suggest a direction to look for an answer to the central question at stake in this conference: Where does the future of humanities lie?

Let me boldly throw out a single word in answer: "Engagement".

I use the term "engagement" here to suggest what is often talked about in terms of the more commonly used expressions "relevance" or "involvement". But I want to avoid the rather hackneyed connotations associated with student slogans about the need for personal, mental, or spiritual guidance, taxpayers' associations' demands for job-related education, or even public officials' inducements for education to be "civic-minded."

What I do want to suggest instead is the urgent need to overcome a separation which has arisen between the academic study of the humanities and the critical questions of daily existence in society.

That the separation exists, I think, is self-evident. How it arose, why it is pernicious, and what can be done to overcome it are the topics with which I want to deal here.

We need not spend much time on the first point. The widely recognized consequences of industrialization, urbanization, business pragmatism, democratization, and above all, technology (described by such people as Toennis, Max Weber, and in our own era, Theodore Roszak) have moved us into what is almost a dichotomization of reality -- the "effective world" of the movers and shapers of nature and society versus the aesthetic world of the dreamers -- meaning humanists, artists, and others who pursue tolerated, intellectual and artistic endeavors. Humanists, for their part, have contributed to this process of isolation through their own professionalism, specialization, and a kind of voluntary withdrawal from the world.

As to why the separation is pernicious, it seems to me that for one thing, both worlds are thereby impoverished. A little quote we use on our brochure does not, I think, overstate the case:

> "The humanities become stagnant, academic, and pedantic when they are removed entirely from the concerns and realities of modern life; modern life becomes that much more haphazard when it is removed from the sense of past endeavors, present values, and future goals."

Beyond the emaciation of the humanities and public life through their mutual abstinence, there is a more compelling reason why the humanities should be more attuned to social concerns. The long-term solution to crises of our civilization may in fact depend on it. Let me return to this point in a moment.

There are -- it seems to me -- three major ways in which the separation can be overcome. The first is simply to foster greater appreciation of culture (with a capital C) and the great traditions for their own sake and the sake of a general enhancement of life which such appreciation brings. There is nothing wrong with this: indeed, life would be unbearably bland and mechanical without the inspiration and multi-dimensionality of cultural enrichment. However, although this is a worthy area for continued emphasis in academic life, this is not what I mean here by engagement or relevance.

The second is the notion of exposure to the full background of human history, philosophy, and literature as preparation for an active involvement as citizen or public servant. This was the traditional aristocratic notion of a "Gentleman's Education" which prepared a European elite for directing the affairs of state. It has applicability in a democratic state as well and deserves to be fostered in every way. Maybe if Nixon had been exposed to professors of ethics and William Blake rather than law professors and Bebe Rebozo . . . . . one can only speculate, but this also is a different sort of relevance than that I am arguing for.

The third way in which the humanities can become fruitfully engaged in society as the one I am championing here. This is the direct interaction of the humanities with critical issues and long term social choices. It is this arena which has become in recent years a kind of "no man's land" for humanists and public figures alike. Yet the humanities have contributions to offer which could enhance the quality of human existence and even increase its chances for survival: In fact not to offer these potential contributions becomes an ill-affordable luxury.

Let me put it this way.

We are all aware of the strong tendency in this society to reduce everything to "bottom lines' of cost ("Who's going to pay for it?"), technique ("How can we do it?"), and power ("Who's got the clout?"), which are taken as the final standards of measurement for personal and social life. After all, "that's where reality is" because "it's power and money which make things happen, despite all the best intentions in the world" . . . so the common wisdom goes.

But it's interesting to note that what is involved here is a subtle change in perspectives from the way human beings can and traditionally have defined our lives -- an inexorable process of flattening out the world in the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Once one has relegated all of the critical questions of morality, identity, personal fate, values, definition of the good life, and decisions on the proper ends of human activity to what is essentially a smorgasboard of utilitarian private choices, of course what is left is a world of raw power, expense ledgers, and manipulative calculation. One can almost hear the dialogue between Socrates and Thrasymachus in the Republic at this point, it is so appropriate -- of course might makes right, if that's the way you define the world.

The important point is that the world we really live in in our everyday existences -- when not befuddled by such reductive rationalizations -- is precisely the multidimensional universe of hopes, fears, emotions, justifications, excuses, ambitions, joys, sorrows, moral judgments, hunches, and evolving self-images of the human condition. It is exactly not the flattened world of inputs, outputs, tradeoffs, payoffs, and mutual backscratching which fits so nicely into the computer and the behaviorist's laboratory.

A psychologist friend of mine told me of a new method of treatment recently devised for an ailing marriage. It was as follows: The husband complained that he was not getting enough sex. The wife complained that the husband was not spending enough time in conversation with her. Solution: Poker chips and a bank. Husband gets one chip for every five minutes of talk: when he has banked the agreed number of chips, Bingo! A neat tradeoff.

This is the flattened world. The full one, the real one is the one in which I ask myself how I am going to spend this 60 to 80 years granted me on this planet: How am I structuring my daily existence? How does society affect this existence and vice versa? Am I in a self-imposed routine like the one Rousseau described when he said "Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains"? What meaning does ethics have for me? How do I relate to my community?

Which brings us back to the earlier question about the contribution of the humanist. This world is the one in which the humanist is at home. The bread and butter of his or her existence is exactly the examination of these manifold dimensions of human aspirations and experiences -- the exploration of the images through which we define ourselves and everybody else. A good novelist can tell me more about the world by which I am surrounded than twenty psychological treatises on interpersonal relationships. A philosopher can help me sort out ethical dilemmas in which I may be involved in a way in which no lawyer, judge, or counselor can. A historian will probably enable me to project the course of my life far better than a futurist or a planner.

What's more important, this insight which the humanist provides is not limited to private illumination. Precisely when one moves away from the notion of the humanities as an aesthetic pastime can one see their potential contribution for dealing with what is common among us. The humanities are at least as much about our public as our private lives.

If we would stop for five minutes, catch our breath, and look at what has been accomplished, it would quickly become evident that there have been Americans of genius and wisdom whose voices, though often ignored, have the ability to make us consider the values we live or wish to live, the history we have accumulated, and the dreams which are so often relegated to the backrooms of our minds.

If this potential relevance of the humanities to public concerns seems plausible and even necessary to you in general, what does this mean in terms of specifics? How can a humanist contribute something truly meaningful to the public consideration of an issue? Now we get to the Nitty Gritty.

Let me cite a few examples.

A favorite theme of humanists has been the love-hate relationship Americans seem to have with their land and the rural life. On the one hand, the rustic life is idealized and sought out, as in the continual search for the frontier. On the other hand, life on the land is seen as brutal and oppressive -- land is to be subdued and sold. Leo Marx, a professor of English and American studies, argues in his book, The Machine in the Garden, that Americans have never really learned how to live in the city. There is the continual nostalgia for the country, which takes its modern form in that crazy lifestyle known as suburbia. Citing the Jeffersonian origins of the pastoral dream, Marx says, "Only the most astute grasped the contradiction between the kind of society that Americans said they wanted and the kind they actually were creating. While the stock rhetoric affirmed a desire for a serene, contemplative life of pastoral felicity, the nations's industrial achievements were demonstrating to all the world its tacit commitment to the most rapid possible rate of technological progress, and to an unlimited buildup of wealth and power. This is the conflict of value dramatized by the interrupted idyll, the episode in which a machine suddenly destroys the tranquility of an asylum in nature." Marx himself is arguing for the importance of the insights derived from literature for the solution to social dilemmas:

"Because imaginative literature remains one of our most delicate and accurate means of joining ideas with emotions, public with private experience, I believe that it can provide insights into the relations between mind and environment which are unavailable elsewhere. I want to show that the literary landscape, properly understood, could help us in planning the future of the actual landscape." Specifically he suggests, "It would be useful to learn more about the values that men attach to various forms of pastoral retreat, and to distinguish between those aspects of rural or wilderness living which are capable of fulfillment, and those which are illusory. For it is possible that our planners could find ways to provide some of those satisfactions within the city."

Lynn White. the historian, who incidentally is a member of our California Council, wrote a fascinating little essay called The Historical Roots of the Ecological Crisis, which traces contemporary attitudes towards the exploitation of the environment back to the ethical, religious, and scientific roots of our western civilization. "Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious", he says, "the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not. We must rethink and refeel our nature and destiny."

Another example: Probably one of the most poignant treatments of the ties between human fate and land use is to be found in William Faulkner's story, "The Bear." In it, his character, Issac McCaslin, remembers that as a child he would hike with the older men several hours into the forest to hunt bear once a year. It was a place where you went to grow up, to come to terms with nature. It was a time of violence and fellowship, of hard times mixed with good times. But as an old man, he has to get in a car and drive for more than a day to reach the wilderness where the bear hides. With amazed horror he realizes that the land has been desecrated, and that people are being dispossessed. All that God had required of the first people who lived on the earth was to hold it "mutual and intact in the communal annonymity of brotherhood, and all the fee he asked was pity and humility and sufferance and endurance and the sweat of his face for bread." But the old Indian chief, Ikkemotubbe, has sold the land to Thomas Sutpen, who in turn made a profit selling the land again, and it was sold again and again, and was raped in the process. Faulkner writes: "Ikkemotubbe, the Chickesaw chief, from whom Thomas Sutpen had had the agreement for money or rum or whatever it was, knew in his turn that not even a fragment had been his to relinquish or sell."

Now you can quarrel with Issac and his author, but it is very hard to argue with the fact that people today feel dispossessed from the land and that young men and women have fewer and fewer places in the wilderness to grow up. You don't have to be a member of the Sierra Club to be concerned about who owns how much of the land, or what is going to happen with strip mining, or how a small town should run its government. These were matters which Faulkner and the creators and thinkers of our tradition considered in their bone marrow.

One could go on and on with examples. Writers and scholars, like Faulkner, who have spent their lives reflecting on and writing about the human condition, have pointed out again and again how deeply our mental and emotional lives are bound up with our uses of the land. They all suggest that what is done with the land in the nation and our localities depends much more upon these feelings and attitudes buried deep in our hearts about the human ties with the land, than upon the latest planning reports or subdivision bills. These are the attitudes which determine the shape and the contents of those reports and bills , and until the attitudes are examined and changed -- if they should be changed -- nothing else will.

An example from quite a different area of issue concern and one that may hit rather close to home is that of equal employment opportunity. George Sher, a philosopher writing in a recent issue of Philosophy and Public Affairs attempts to sort out the arguments involved in justifying reverse discrimination in employment. Among the arguments he considers are the questions of whether a group as a whole (as opposed to individuals) can

be wronged, whether it is justified to see the question of employment in terms of the distribution of goods, and what relationship past wrongs have to current benefits. Understanding the problem in these terms could make a great deal of difference in the application of the principle. "It is," he concludes, "the key to an adequate justification of reverse discrimination to see that practice, not as the redressing of past privations, but rather as a way of neutralizing the present competitive disadvantage caused by those past privations and thus as a way of restoring equal access to those goods which society distributes competitively."

This suggests another area where humanists have provided illuminating insights to issues of social policy: Criminal justice. Philosophers have of late been shocking the liberal community by again taking up the ancient notion (until recently dismissed as vindictive) of retributive justice. Siding with Ken Kesey and others concerned about the big brotherism contained in the designation of a criminal as "sick" or "socially maladapted," they suggest it is much more humane to treat convicted criminals as competent human beings who must take the penalty for breaking a law and not in hypocritically claiming to help them "readjust" to society.

Still another fundamentally different area of social action in which underlying human value questions have been examined is that of political participation. In a brilliant essay entitled, Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands, political theorist Michael Walzer analyzes the moral quandry faced by an ethically sensitive person involved in politics. Walzer invokes the line of the Communist leader, Hoerderer, in Sartre's play: "I have dirty hands right up to the elbows. I've plunged them in filth and blood. Do you think you can govern innocently?" "My own answer is no," Walzer responds, "I don't think I could govern innocently: Nor do most of us believe that those who govern us are innocent -- even the best of them. The real questions at stake," he continues, "are how the individual and society deal with the necessary loss of innocence in political life."

Even our contemporary concern with energy has historical precedent in respect to the essential human questions involved. Late in the last century, Henry Adams visited the cathedrals of France and was overwhelmed by the power which the figure of the Virgin Mary exercised in Medieval Europe. In 1900, he visited the exposition in Paris and saw, for the first time, a dynamo. From these two experiences and a probing intellect, Adams reflected on how different energy sources tend to characterize and define a culture. Years before the oil crisis he used his imagination and scholarship to speculate on how energy creates us and our habits. This insight is like a new spotlight on the tired argument that we simply have to slow down. It forces us out of a merely quantitative examination of our context by asking questions about energy and the quality of life.

One could go on and on with examples of medical ethics, the control and availability of education, the distribution of power, taxation, consumerism, and a myriad of other issues. The point is that humanists have addressed social issues and in doing so have found their insights surprisingly relevant to social policy.

The examples I've cited here have all been from articles and books by humanists about issues of concern in public affairs, But I want to suggest an even more important and effective way this interchange can happen: In the form of open public dialogue.

That is what the state humanities program is all about. (Here's the ringer). We are attempting to stimulate in our own way through a variety of formats throughout the state, a continuing and meaningful dialogue on contemporary public policy issues -- a dialogue which centrally involves the humanities.

I won't take the time now to describe the details of the program. We can do that later if you like, but I will give you a sample of the kinds of programs in other states which have taken place under its auspices: they have dealt with an incredible variety of topics including such things as women's status, mental health, gambling, energy policy, water rights, Indian/White relations, school policy, a controversy on hair length, impact of coal development, the construction of high voltage transmission lines, the proposed construction of a new prison, and on and on. Probably one of the most unlikely issues ever to be addressed by a humanities program was the question of cloud-seeding in a project which was organized by an even more unlikely coalition of local residents and philosophy instructors from a state university. How does the humanities relate to cloud-seeding?: through the issues of administrative decision-making, governmental responsiveness, and local control. The issue, it turns out, is a fascinating one, replete with subtleties of the impact of technology on local communities, the ability of a government agency to change without consent of the population weather patterns over a wide area, and the ability of one community to make decisions which dramatically affect others in the same region.

These are simply illustrations which suggest the vast possibilities open to the significant application of the humanities to the panorama of social concern. Whatever the format, whether in the classroom, in publications, in an open public forum, or television, the important thing is that the humanities are engaged with society as a whole in addressing our contemporary human dilemmas.

It seems to me that the very structure of this conference is attuned to these concerns and that every one of the discussion group topics contains an important dimension of public relevance, whether it deals with the teaching of morality, popularizing the humanities, or establishing new courses for minorities and women. The titles seem to me to be asking the right questions. There seems to be a shared assumption that the "humanities as garnish" approach fails to meet basic needs within and without the humanities.

J. H. Plumb, the noted English historian, introduces a recent collection of essays on the "Crisis in the Humanities" with the following lines:

"The rising tide of scientific and industrial societies, combined with the battering of two world wars, has shattered the confidence of humanists in their capacity to lead or to instruct. Uncertain of their social function, their practitioners have taken refuge in two desperate courses -- both suicidal. Either they blindly cling to their traditional attitudes and pretend that their function is what it was and that all will be well so long as change is repelled, or they retreat into their own private, professional world and deny any social function to their subject. And so the humanities are at the cross-roads; at a crisis in their existence: they must either change the image that they present, adapt themselves to the needs of a society dominated by science and technology, or retreat into social triviality."

And, I might add, such a retreat into triviality poses equal dangers for the humanities and for society at large.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: Different and Valid Approaches in Teaching the Humanities--What Are They?

Summary -- Tape of Discussion of the Group

I. Several possible approaches to teaching humanities:

A. Individual survey courses need careful choice of reading materials.
B. Team teaching.
C. (Len Epstein, Monterey Peninsula College) attempts to combine a "free university" idea with academic classroom situation and academics with experience.
   1. He takes the "i" out of humanities and calls it "Human-ties."
   2. He teaches one course called "Contemporary American Culture."
   3. Another course called "American Mind in the Wilderness." He uses one-day hikes and one three-day back-packing trip to bring students close to the experience of what they are reading and studying.
   4. In both cases, he tries to make the subject-matter of the course, the students and their concerns.
   5. One problem with such an approach is how do you avoid the "everyone has a right to his own opinion" situation when you use such a flexible self-exploration type of approach? Are students' interpretations of the humanities as good as one who has studied and contemplated them deeply? In other words, do we tend to foster a wide-open relativism of values and meaning, and is this really how things are?

II. Other methods of involving students:

A. Use journals done at home and handed around anonymously in the class.
B. Elicit anonymous reactions to what is presented in the course.
C. Encourage listening on the parts of students and try to convince students that other people are worthy of listening too.
D. Field trips -- get people out of the classroom to break down barriers to communication.
E. Have parties, dinners, or picnics and share food -- people are to be total people; however, emphasis is still and must be academic. The basic encounter is still with ideas.
F. One teacher talks about her faults in the first week of classes in order to help break barriers between her and her students -- to allow them to know that she is human even though she has the role of teacher.

III. It is necessary to have some articulate and involved students to work with and you must have several students who are willing to discuss the issues. There is always a crisis period about 1/3 of the way through the course where people in class want to know what "we are doing" -- and time should be taken to clarify the course purposes and goals at this point.

IV. Team teaching.

A. Members of the team need to be compatible.
B. They also need to be secure in their own teaching.
C. Such a course needs a great deal of careful planning and coordination.

D. Disadvantages:
   1. Can't always reach a community concept with team teaching because classes are usually too large.
   2. Forced often to use large group instruction with small groups added, but large group situations and particularly classrooms are never very humanizing.
   3. We can level with the students that these problems do exist and then try to make the very best of the situation.
   4. Some schools use a combination of English-Philosophy-Science, but one of the problems is that all of the interdisciplinary people must not assume that they can teach their original course -- a whole new approach is required.

V. Many assign individual research (e.g., reading 100-400 pps.) on community problems (e.g., the welfare system in their community).

A. There are, however, problems in giving freedom to students to do individual investigation and research.
   1. Students often can't handle it well; they "choke" and write bum papers.
   2. The teacher can use individual conferences to help remedy this, but they are tremendously time-consuming for both teacher and student.
   3. One of the key problems is how to prepare students to accept responsibility and to initiate creative effort and tasks. It takes at least 6-8 weeks to prepare them.

B. One possible solution is not to assign a paper, but rather some kind of creative project. Have students do research for a paper, but don't worry about a paper, necessarily; instead, apply the research to a project of some kind.
   1. A vast majority or students aren't interested in research.
   2. Perhaps they can be challenged, however, with some creative application of their research.
   3. They can be asked to do a project which defines them as human beings.
   4. Another problem with this approach to research is the negative reinforcement from the rest of the faculty, who won't condone anything other than papers as an application of research; therefore, students don't believe you really mean it or know what you want, or they are insecure because they're so used to using the traditional approach to research.
   5. You can start with very simple exercises or projects early in the semester where people can fail without too much loss of face.
   6. The main thing here seems to be to get students involved experientially as soon and as often as possible.
   7. All of these have advantages and disadvantages of stressing the nonverbal over the verbal.

CONFERENCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENT: Isn't there a real problem here? Don't we want all people to be at least competently verbal? Aren't we cheating them if we don't get them to articulate their experiences? Experiencing meaningfully is very important, but can we understand what we experience fully without at least trying to articulate it verbally?

8. One instructor says to his classes that no one is forced to be verbal, but those who aren't or who won't, must take responsibility for their silence. He says the way they are in the classroom is the way they are outside of it, and they must accept what they are and do and take the responsibility for it wherever they are.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT
Beverly Palmer, Chaffey College

Group I began with each of the three leaders giving a five minute presentation of his or her "different and valid approach" in teaching the humanities. Most questions and comments were stimulated by Len Epstein's proposal. He strongly emphasizes student participation via field experience in his Contemporary American Culture class, with students engaging in volunteer work through trips to convalescent homes and prisons. For example, students first read various accounts about the wilderness and then have the chance to experience it themselves.

We also discussed briefly the advantages and problems in team-teaching in inter-disciplinary studies courses. A team-taught course requires real subordination of each teacher's own goals and ego to the agreed-upon goals and demands of the course. Still, advantages are the diminution of departmental barriers, and interesting a student in the humanities via a science/humanities course, for example, like one organized around Bronowski's "Ascent of Man."

The non-verbal student presents a special problem in humanities classes. Several teachers proposed that, instead of a term paper, students have a project, like designing a set for a play. Short, easily-realized projects, like soap carving, can give students confidence at first and lead to more sophisticated performances later on. We agreed that students don't really work well with a lot of freedom but that we should encourage them anyway to work independently both in the choosing and organizing of their projects.

An important conclusion of the group was that the classroom environment and size are dehumanizing. We should admit this weakness to our students from the start, and seek alternatives, whether elaborate ones like Len Epstein's (above), or more simple ones like divisions into smaller groups and cultivation of subjective journal writing.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT
John Williamson, Reedley College

Discussion Group Question: Can or Should Morality Be Taught in the Humanities?

It was agreed at the outset that the objective would certainly not be to establish an explicit, prescribed code of conduct or moral behavior. It was suggested that we consider such things as the erosion of values in the world today, as well as the analytic aspects of the humanities as applied to morals.

Two book titles were mentioned, not included in the bibliography sheet provided with conference material. These were a book by Holbrook, Peck, and Havighorst on humanities and morals, and one by John Wilson entitled Introduction to Moral Education.

With the approach then of exploration rather than dictation, the following aspects were discussed:

A. The distinction between "ethics" and "morality".
B. The importance of cultural backgrounds: the need for transmitting culture,
C. Awareness of the "student's world."
D. Need to resist outside pressures.
E. Emphasis on the individual.
   1. A music teacher emphasized the cultural life of man as something to be revealed gradually rather than by direct teaching of specifics.
F. Historical aspects, such as separation of church and state.
G. The idea that mutual understanding is a moral act.
H. A need for a broadening, achieved by direct, unabstracted contact with other people's minds.
I. Changes to be brought about in an individual's character.
J. Some dissension: Isn't the whole question simply irrelevant?

The main value of the discussion would appear to be exploratory: many promising areas of inquiry were opened up. The general trend of thought was that morality, which of course should not be dictated, involves a connection with culture, through effective communication, and a recognition of the importance of the individual.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: Should the Humanities Be Popularized?

I. One instructor felt that you can popularize by requiring students to apply what they learn in the humanities to actual situations in society and culture.

   A. You can have them do research and investigation and then apply this in some creative project in the social milieu, such as the welfare system, poverty, ghetto communities, etc.
   B. You can cover subjects such as ecology, man and technology, etc., in class thus making the humanities immediately applicable.
   C. In this way the student does what he or she wants, but the problem is that students don't know what they want to do and this creates problems. However, the instructor feels that the student and the teacher together can work these problems out.

II. Definition of terms.

   A. Another instructor feels that people nowadays have a better understanding of what "humanities" means than they used to when it was first used.
   B. Popularizing also involves relevance, but it's not too difficult to show connections between the humanities, no matter when created, and current social issues (e.g., Shaw's Major Barbara and munitions manufacturing and our current armament producing magnates, factories, and countries). Relevance really comes to the humanities and can't be avoided, so, in one sense, then, there is really no need for the humanities to be popularized.
   C. There are real dangers in popularization. For example, in one community college, the P. E. department brought a course before the curriculum committee entitled "Sports Appreciation" and wanted it to count as credit toward fulfilling the humanities requirement!
   D. Another instructor added that the question is not "should the humanities be popular?", but "should they be popularized?," i.e., should the material that is covered be different, which doesn't necessarily mean "watered down."

III. It is very easy to prostitute the humanities, given pressures of low enrollments, financial difficulties, and job problems.

   A. We must maintain standards or we are selling out if we teach works in the humanities which are inferior.
   B. Choices we have:
      1. We can attempt new approaches to draw students into the humanities and into works which we know are of value.
      2. We can capitulate to the mass level and eventually make the humanities no more than a very popular cartoon.
      3. One person felt that "relevance" is a miserable term. He believes that the humanities are relevant merely because they are the humanities, and that the ethic of Gilgamesh is more relevant than that of Jacqueline Susann.
      4. Another choice is to reduce the amount of material read and taught, but to continue to teach the best material.

5. Another yet, is to go where the students are, e.g., prisons, community centers, etc., and don't start with the presumption that we have "great ideas" to impart, but with the students' concerns, and move from there to the great ideas.

C. The humanities can be extremely relevant, but if there's no one there to hear about them, then what?

D. One instructor made a plea for "irrelevance." The community college should try to be many things to many people and do "outreach" types of programs, but still recognize its limitations and continue to appeal to the brightest students as well. For these students there may be only 4-7 years in their lives when they can be "irrelevant," when they can study non-directly pragmatic subjects and ideas. We should preserve this "monkish" character of education but also somehow democratize it. The key problem here is how to do all of these things.

IV. One instructor said he would rather have students read Jacqueline Susann than nothing --- the first instructor disagreed violently.

A. A student attending the conference said that if students can grasp literary subject matter, they can be enthralled by it; some, however, can't

1. He suggested trying to compare works, such as Macbeth with Mickey Spillane, for example, or James Thurber.
2. (Rebuttal) At that point students are no longer reading Shakespeare. The only value in doing these two works side by side is to see what makes good art good and bad art bad. To pretend that Macbeth is merely the story of a king who kills another king is to eliminate precisely those qualities of language and image which make Shakespeare valuable. It's not the plot alone; you must read the work.
3. (Rebuttal of that) You can't ignore there's more than plot involved, but won't many students do just that if you don't try to really come to them?

B. We also tend to assign works so deeply imbedded in a former historical context that students find it difficult to relate to them. We could use more 20th Century works and find a great deal of great art there. To capitulate and play constantly and dishonestly on student fads (e.g., rock music) is a gross insult to students and does irreparable damage to the humanities and to both the students and teachers involved.

C. Two ways that popularizing the humanities can go:

1. That kind of study which tries to attract rather than engage student minds -- implication was that this is not a valid objective.
2. Take great and good material and get around some of the traditional blocks in presenting it -- the group was, for this approach, as long as the main "stuff" of the humanities is still there to get to the students.

V. Should popularization of the humanities be done as a defense against the community college becoming a "blue collar" college?

A. Isn't the challenge to the intellect exactly the difference between a bonafide humanities course and something like "Appreciation of Sports" course which the P.E. department tried to get counted as the humanities?

B. An instructor agreed and added that if you're dealing with intellect, there's no way out of dealing with language, and the core of the humanities is language.

C. He added, "We have a crisis in the humanities because we are trying to be all things to all people, and that's not possible.

D. We've given up education in the humanities by saying that in order to deal with the kinds of students coming to our college, it's not possible to teach them works of great value and to get them to write well. We should say it's difficult, but we can do it without giving up or diluting any greatness or importance that the humanities have to offer.

E. This problem also exists at all levels of post-secondary education, not just community colleges, partly because of the overstressing on vocation as a goal of education.

F. TV has done a great deal to publicize the humanities (e.g., Kenneth Clark and Bronowski), and perhaps this is one way of getting to the students.

G. Another instructor agreed that we should try not to dilute, but we should popularize to the extent that we give the students more options.

   1. We should force students as they select options to ask if their study is really worthy of them, or are they just "copping-out"?
   2. This person doesn't think the teacher should be the only one to present options (e.g., Macbeth or T. S. Eliot), but that students should have a right to question options and there should be a lot of options.

H. He didn't mean to suggest that Jacqueline Susann should be offered or preferred over Macbeth, but everything should be grist for the humanities teacher's mill -- and anything ought to be able to be questioned by both students and the teacher.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: What Kind of Humanities Courses Should Be Offered for Non-Transfer Students?

I. Who are non-transfer students?

A. We tend first to think of the person in the shop as the typical non-transfer student, but he is not the only type.
B. There are students who are not after a degree but are in college for an expansion of their own capabilities or life -- e.g., housewives, vets, and older adults searching for more than skills.

II. What type of course should be offered to such students?

A. First, students are citizens in the old Grecian sense -- people in society fulfilling roles -- first their own self-identification, then their relationship with others.
B. Many people are taking courses now and will be in the future which are not pointed toward any degree program.
C. Should we teach watered down or substitute courses, or do we have the desire to give A-1 education to them in the same way in which we try to give it to transfer students? One instructor remarked that it is difficult to make a 2 unit art introduction history course vital and interesting to non-transfer students.

III. Problems of the level of ability among non-transfer students.

A. Some non-transfer students are very intelligent.
B. Others are badly in need of remedial help in all areas.
C. Can we handle both of these in one course? Can we also handle both readers and non-readers in the same class?
D. Difficulty of handling grading and evaluation in such classes. Two alternatives:
   1. Make C the average grade and provide objective testing and participation as a means to attain this. Add research papers or projects for B or A.
   2. Make courses for non-transfer students pass-fail or credit-no credit.

IV. One instructor considers his courses for non-transfer students not inferior to but superior to most transfer courses offered.

A. Because their purpose is to increase students' wisdom about life and to get them involved rather than teach them 450 pieces of information -- he feels that this latter is the wrong approach to begin with.
B. His type of course, he feels, is vastly superior to what he was expected to take at University of California and private schools.
C. He does not consider his courses watered down, even though there may be less quantity of reading assignments.

V. Some other problems:

A. The non-reader and the incompetent reader -- students can go all the way through high school without having to read anything.

B. Humanities courses have to be experiential -- reading goes along with this, but they are fundamentally experiential. The student won't remember facts; he'll remember what he experienced at the time he was taking the course.
C. Our real concern should not be how much we can pack into a course, but whether the student is getting anything at all of value out of it. This is basically the problem at the university and four-year college rather than at the community college, but we still have it also.

VI. Other characteristics of the non-transfer student:

A. We seem to automatically assume they are not bright.
B. Many non-transfer students are showing up in transfer courses (especially true of minorities) because they are opposed to being pushed down anymore.
C. The non-transfer student can be a student who doesn't want to take transfer courses whether he could handle them or not, or he definitely could be deprived or remedial; however, we shouldn't assume the latter without checking.
D. Most transfer students are really vocational too, except that their vocation will be law, medicine, teaching, etc.
E. The majority of students who declare themselves as transfer students don't transfer.

VII. Cynicism about country, society, religion, and in turn, education.

A. What actually is education holding out to students beside some kind of a license to practice a skill?
B. We have to find a way of directly taking on that cynicism or despair - it's not just going to go away.

VIII. Wouldn't the essence of any humanities course be lost to any non-reader? How do you teach such a course non-verbally?

A. Emphasize audio-visual media as a teaching device.
B. Don't eliminate reading but deemphasize it.
C. Can require or suggest some co-enrollment in a reading course.
D. Water down requirements for non-readers for completion of the course.
E. If we drive away remedial people, then we may be a little like hospitals who refuse to admit the sick.
F. Is a format like the TV program "60 Minutes" a good idea? That is, 15 minutes on each area to be covered vary carefully prepared for presentation to the students.
G. There is still a feeling among conference participants concerning non-readers that we should let them come to the conclusion that they need to read before we require it.

CONFERENCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENT: This seems to be an undercurrent feeling in dealing with non-transfer and vocational-technical students -- to let them "feel" the need. However, even though self-motivation is very important in learning anything, shouldn't we also encourage more actively this need rather than wait for "the spirit to move them"?

H. Use anthologies that are issue-oriented toward present day issues.
I. Encourage them to use media to present their ideas -- let them "tape" their research papers.

IX. Additional problems in offering humanities courses for non-transfer students.

A. Some use student proctors to elicit verbal responses from essentially non-verbal students, thereby by-passing the authority figure of the teacher.
B. The more important and major conflict, however, may really be learning how to think, not just verbalize, even though there is a definite connection -- the problem may be which comes first?
C. How do we develop the capacity to perceive? For example, how can students be taught Aristotle?
D. How do we reach people who don't understand language too well?
E. Palomar College has put adults who are taking English as a second language and Spanish as a second language together, and they learn much more from each other than they do from separate teachers in separate classes dealing with their separate but similar problems. We need to provide the environment for meaningful verbal exchange to take place.
F. Non-verbal non-readers do not talk while <u>on campus</u>. When off-campus, however, they try to convert academic stuff to street talk.
G. In dealing with ethical problems, for example, there is a difference between working with the Golden Mean or saying, "Which is worse? Not to go to college at all or to work your way through as a hooker or a pusher?" Our approach can make the difference in whether or not students can use or be interested in ethics. We can use the second approach as a tactic to get to other deeper and more theoretical aspects of ethics.
H. Not all humanities people or educators or administrators feel that it's important that humanities should or can be applied to people's lives, their families, and their churches. The implication is that we need to develop this desire in all educators at all levels as well as in our students.

HUMANITIES AND NONTRANSFER STUDENTS

Michael Anker, Contra Costa College

The problem is not whether we should provide humanities, so much as it is to specify and clarify the purposes humanities education serves for nontransfer students. No one's life is confined to their job, so I doubt that anyone's education should be restricted narrowly either.

Students themselves could list many things they wish they would get from education, however, little they may actually expect to obtain those things. The heart of our problem seems to me confusion over our purposes, a confusion reflected most clearly in the lack of coherence in General Education requirements. Students rarely understand why the requirements exist. How much are they likely to learn if they do not accept the goals or even know what they are? I wonder if we have thought through clearly the goals of humanities education. I have some ideas I want to just suggest here. I would be more than happy to talk more about these ideas wherever you find me.

Recommendations

1. Every course and every program and every requirement should have specified purposes. I am not concerned with making these purposes into behavioral objectives, but only making every student able to find a clear, meaningful answer to why they are taking a course.

2. I suggest organizing requirements around purposes so that students as much as possible are taking things which they also have some desire to take. (I have attached a draft of a proposal along these lines that I am making to my own college.)

3. My own thinking now is focusing on criticizing the traditional goals of humanities education. We handle goals in the area of intellectual development and intellectual virtues foolishly. This society, even this period of intellectual history has little confidence in the reliability or usefulness of rationality. How can we teach intellectual virtues in a world that is so irrational? We want to teach them, but we cannot do so and expect to succeed unless we recognize that we cannot assume any trust in reason, any trust that the world is rational and can therefore be understood as well as affected by rationality.

   Turning to aesthetic goals as an alternative to teaching values is only to become part of the decay of idealism, the weakening of confidence that life can be made fulfilling. In addition, aesthetic goals have no legitimacy as requirements rather than preferences.

   My point is that we must try to find something to teach in the absence of cultural traditions that are trusted. In these confused times, we need to reach for something to replace the faith that life is good. We need something to sustain the search for a solution to the horrors around us, the frustrations we and our students endure.

Humanities education is endangered most by the same problems that make it particularly important. The same loss of confidence that there are any deeper values to be found than private pleasures makes humanities classes seem foolish and unnecessary. We cannot simply say there are such values, for the world around us does not reflect the power of these values. Even we who believe they exist, do not agree on what they are. We have to recognize that our students' skepticism may not be articulated, but it is quite reasonable: these values are not fulfilled now, are not evident at all. We need to teach from an understanding of what giving up hope for them can cost us, and what we can use for the strength to pursue ideals now that we no longer trust in God or human intelligence to create them. Teaching humanities now must be to recognize why the humanities are not taken seriously.

REPORT ON GENERAL EDUCATION
Michael Anker

The primary purpose of my study was to discover if there were some General Education goals which would have broad support and which could, then, serve as the basis for clarifying and re-examining of our current program and requirements. Very quickly, I discovered that such agreement was not possible. Individuals I talked to saw different goals as the vital and fundamental ones. Any hope of finding common ground across these differences seemed to be blocked by various anxieties that change was unlikely to occur except to the detriment of the values held.

Thus, the direction of the study had to be changed. The emphasis became an attempt to envision a program as broad and flexible as the variety of goals believed in by different people but in which the flexibility did not entail a total obscurity and confusion about goals. The results of my research is still in the form of a proposal. This proposal is not my personal ideal of a General Education program. It is far from being my ideal. Rather, I have tried to harmonize as much of what I heard as possible, and to state as clearly as possible the issues involved.

Part I of the report will list the basic assumptions I see as underlying the proposal. Part II contains a general sketch of the proposal. Part III will offer some further detail about the proposal. Part IV will list some further possibilities for specific programs.

I. Assumptions

A. We must seek to teach our students as they are, not the students some of the faculty wish they were. The danger here is that we do not want to so emphasize the needs of some groups of students that we cause the loss of other groups. However, the education of transfer students will continue to be shaped largely by the requirements of the transfer institution. The students for whom we must take primary responsibility are those who will get their entire college education from us. This assumption, if acceptable after discussion -- the issue isn't whether everyone is glad about it -- has many practical implications. For example, setting minimum achievement levels in with (sic) and reading for the A.A. and A.S. degrees may seem inappropriate to "a college," but would clearly have considerable usefulness if we are talking about the real limitations many of our students have in these areas.

B. Large numbers of students cannot see any purpose in the General Education requirements we now make. We seem to be contributing to their coming to classes only because they are required. Both instructors and students will profit if the goals of General Education can be made clear and recognizable and related very clearly to the specific requirements. Right now we lack even clear goals as an institution, but clear goals must also characterize the programs or they are window dressing and only add to confusion and even to contempt for the educational process.

C. We will never be able to offer students all the knowledge, skills, and qualities they could find valuable in their lives. Choices will be made among valuable goals, the only questions are who will make them and how?

II. The Proposal

The easiest solution to providing a program with clear purposes would be to offer a course of study with little opportunity for electives. The problem is to offer that clarity of purpose while retaining enough flexibility so that we can meet the needs and goals of students varied in both interests and attained skills. I have been able to come up with only one idea for a program which would be no less flexible than what we offer now but would provide each student with a coherent course of study. The idea is that we set up a list of the goals of General Education together with a set of courses that can realistically lead a student toward the attainment of that goal. Individual students would be required not to take certain courses or a certain number of courses from long lists. Rather, each student would select the goals that were most important to him or her, and then would take the set of courses developed to lead to that goal.

Thus, one student's education might emphasize basic skills while another was emphasizing preparation for citizenship and still another was getting a brief introduction to the wide variety of human intellectual endeavors. All of them, however, would be in programs the purpose of which was clear to them and which they had chosen.

This proposal could be put into practice in many ways. Some goals might be expected of every student, e.g., attainment of basic skill levels. Other goals could be grouped in such a way as to insure against too much narrowness of education. The heart of the proposal is only that instead of choosing courses which are unrelated to each other and which often have no clear goal at all, students would be choosing sets of courses with specific and explicit purposes and covering enough time to make it far more likely that real progress towards the goal could be achieved than is likely in a single course.

III. Some Secondary Proposals

A. For non-degree students. Some students come here only interested in a Certificate of Achievement or unable to afford the time for more. I suggest we consider developing a single course meant to show them what besides vocational preparation can be gotten from a college. The hope would be that more would find enough valuable goals to continue their education as they find the time. Such a course could, of course, be required. Clearly, the whole purpose or Certificate programs is lost if we add any large number of requirements. In either case, the purpose of the course would be lost if it were not attractive and intriguing in itself. However, I leave the issue of requiring it as one more open question. Perhaps such a course could also serve for introduction and or orientation to the General Education Program for degree students, whether for all or only for those unable to decide which of the several goals they want for themselves.

B. Some General Education could be done within the vocational preparation. Some of the broader issues that could be discussed with each vocational area.
    1. The ethical problems that came up in the particular kind of work.
    2. The social meaning of this work, work as more than just a way to money or other private pleasure.
    3. Understanding relationships at work: tensions and management theory for the employee, the non-manager.
    4. Aesthetic possibilities in this type of work.

In closing, let me say again, I have not tried to envision my ideal program. I have only tried to offer the framework for developing a program that would have clearer purposes than the smorgasbord program we (and almost every other community college) currently offer. However, it became obvious to me that we could not easily get a specific program without ignoring the desires and beliefs of many faculty members as well as the desire and needs of many students. There was no single program that would be widely acceptable even to the faculty alone. Therefore, I suggest a flexible program offering a variety of courses of study. No one would find every part of such a program satisfying, but perhaps we could reach widespread agreement on what goals should be included as options. In this way we could serve diverse students while still offering each of them clear purposes as the justification for work required of them.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT
John Tufft, Taft College

Michael Anker prepared a paper entitled Humanities and Nontransfer Students, which focused on the traditional approach to the humanities, challenging the traditional teaching procedures and course content as inadequate and unsatisfactory since these courses are structured primarily to uphold the virtues that are being challenged in everyday society. Young people do not recognize nor do they accept traditional values as being effective in the world today. Instead of stressing ethics and aesthetics in separate courses, perhaps in a "watered-down" state, humanities of the future will need to be infused in non-transfer course goals.

The consensus of group thinking was on the need to present valid reasons for moral decisions: "Why not do what you are told to do by the boss on the job, even though you know the customer is being cheated?" Or for the nurse: "Why not try to hide the mistake when the patient has been treated negligently?" It was generally recognized that teaching moral values to adults is far too late in life to be very effective. However, values should be a part of course content in non-transfer courses.

Consequences of moral acts are to be as much a part of courses in the non-transfer program as they are in abstract discussions in courses specifically within the humanities divisions. It was generally agreed that other factors found in typical humanities courses should be applied in pragmatic form in existing non-transfer courses, not as specific courses for non-transfer students except as demand from particular student groups express their needs and desires for particular emphasis. Then, such courses should be centered on matters that pertain to student needs and to general vocational training.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT

Ron Dethlefson, Bakersfield College

Discussion Group Question: What problems are there in communicating the Humanities, and how can they be solved?

1. A main problem seems to be the confusion over our vision of man. The idea was advanced that our view of man tends to be harsh and hypercritical. We need to emphasize man's positive aspects and accomplishments to a greater extent than has been the fashion.

2. Another problem discussed was that we seem to be missing opportunities, as teachers, to give our students humanistic experiences that are real. We are bound to traditional classroom teaching devices. We need to involve our students in innovative experiences which make the classroom a mirror of life. Humanities need to be communicated in other than course formats. Backpacking trips, workshops for the community at large, community-student debates, public library displays, speakers' bureaus, and college participation in mass media transmission of humanistic ideals were all mentioned as methods of opening up our traditional classrooms.

3. It was also suggested that we should not stray to completely unstructured methods of communicating humanities. Students should be required to present feedback to instructors for evaluation. Instructors need to know what students are feeling in some definitive form. The forms of feedback can be varied, and they need to be geared to the abilities of all levels of students.

All in all, we need to use many different modes of communication to bring the humanities to our students and to the communities wherein we live. And we need to dwell on the more positive achievements of man in a realistic fashion. We need to discuss humanistic concepts widely and see that they are put to work. Communicating is the first step.

Ron Dethlefson
Bakersfield College

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT
Beverly Palmer, Chaffey College

No argument exists about whether we have problems in communicating the humanities. So the discussion of the group focused on ways of dealing with these problems. We began by asking some broad questions, which probably and not surprisingly remained unanswered by the group as a whole: What are our goals in communicating (this term carefully distinguished from teaching) the humanities? Do we wish to change our students' attitudes? their values?

An implicit consensus within this group was that we employ other means of communicating the humanities besides the written word. Television was the first and obvious alternative method explored. Most thought that we shouldn't reject television out of hand, that many images of man on TV should be analyzed, and that some offerings are excellent. However, a few teachers suggested that students have experiences outside the classroom like visiting a woman writer's home, and taking field trips to museums or ghettos. Arguing against this view, one or two teachers pointed out that not only did some students see the ghetto as an everyday, not a special experience, but also many of these other proposals were simply not available to them.

I liked one teacher's comment that, whether our students are from the ghetto, the farm or the suburb, their (and our) fundamental problem is the excessive ordinariness of their backgrounds as contrasted with the superb examples which the humanities offer. Perhaps, then, getting students to see the differences and become more alert to these superb examples (which may not indeed be so remote) is one way to begin to overcome this problem.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: How Can the Humanities and Vocational-Technical Education Co-exist?

I. How can we get more humanities education into vocational-technical education?

A. Get more humanities courses mandated by law? How, for example, can we get more humanities into the nursing program?
B. Do all vocational-technical areas feel the need for humanities courses (e.g., maybe nursing programs would like more, but would the auto mechanics?).
C. Are some students really happy and thankful <u>not</u> to take humanities but rather to "sink their teeth" into skills courses?
   1. The nursing program people definitely have the brains for such courses -- they are for the most part not remedial.
   2. One philosopher in the group who was a former auto mechanic for 11 years, reflected at the time he was a mechanic on what he was going to do with his life -- he sees no problem in being philosophical while being an auto mechanic (one can question the significance of working, the ethics of repair, etc.).
D. Aren't the humanities a definite part of life anyhow, and isn't the question how the vocational-technical people are going to get it -- from the TV, movies, newspapers, or the classroom?
   1. Can we combine some or all of these possible sources?
   2. Since time is such a factor with vocational-technical people, would meaningful TV instruction during either early hours or on Saturdays be a viable means of bringing them the humanities?

II. A vocational-technical person who was at the conference said that there is a definite need for the humanities.

A. The automotive maintenance instructor must teach ethics along with technical skills because there is a very definite need for it, but how are we going to teach it and who is going to do it?
B. The problem with the vocation-technical students is that they don't feel they need the humanities, and if you call what you're doing that, they'll probably shy away.
C. Another problem is that these types of students need to know what the world of work is all about, but they need someone who's been in the world of work to tell them about it.
D. The implication is that whatever humanities are taught, there must be a practical application which directly affects what the student is doing, learning to do, or going to be doing.
E. Second implication is that regular humanities teachers may be too far removed from ordinary life and too involved with theory and perhaps esoteric aspects of poetry, etc., to really attract this type of student or to teach him the humanities significantly.

III. Societal changes in attitudes affecting vocational-technical students and other problems with bringing them the humanities.

A. There is a lot of excitement these days about getting students to learn a trade and become self-sufficient -- this is primarily what many of them are interested in. The feeling of many vocational-technical instructors and students is that after they accomplish this, they can come back for humanities.

CONFERENCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENT: Can and will they, though? Shouldn't they be learning humanities along with any trade or skill they are learning -- shouldn't they be learning to be better human beings at the same time they are learning to be excellent auto mechanics?

B. Evening enrollments are up while day enrollments are down because many students are already working, and more and more students are interested in becoming "indians" rather than "chiefs."
C. Time schedules may be too binding, so perhaps we should emphasize weekends, early mornings, and evenings.
D. The heaviest enrollments are in continuing education and in vocational-technical areas, so that we must furnish courses in these areas and in the evenings.
E. Students are also saying, "I don't have to take anything anymore." They can get certificates rather than degrees which don't require many courses in other than their specific skill areas.
F. If we increase requirements, we may discourage students from taking any programs at all. If you can show them and give them courses and instruction they can grab onto, then the threat of "have to take" has been removed.
G. If we offer vocational courses without too many requirements outside of them and just for certificates, then once we have them in the college program, we can encourage and seduce them to go for a degree program later.
   1. After we've got their interest through their skills courses to go for a degree, then we can present them with what is required.
   2. If they're motivated by vocational-technical courses, they'll probably be motivated and do better in other areas like the humanities.

IV. How about reversal of requirements? Should vocational-technical courses be required or taught to humanities students?

A. One view is that the reversal is not right because a teacher, for example, can make a living without vocational-technical courses. However, when people are not working and in their leisure hours, they get involved with areas of the humanities which cut across all lines. This view says that vocational-technical courses should not be required of all students because we don't need skills if we already have a vocation or profession.
B. Another view says that a human being should be totally developed and well-rounded which would include vocational-technical abilities and knowledge. With this background, which the teacher had in many areas, he felt he was better qualified to speak all the students' language because he has such broad experience in all kinds of job areas.
C. Still yet another view says that if people know more skills well, they'd be more in control of their environment which can add to their living better.

V. Problem of society's and especially parents' attitudes toward manual labor.

A. The goals which parents have for their children concerning higher education have caused a loss of emphasis, contact, or value for manual labor as a rewarding way of life.
B. The rest of the faculty on campus, other than vocational-technical, should try to explode the myth that manual labor is worthless and valueless.
C. Another advantage of doing this type of work is that one can be assured of a living, sometimes free from lots of mental tensions, while he does other things such as reading, attending plays, listening to music, etc.

VI. More humanities courses should not be <u>required</u> (the key word here), but what suitable substitute is there for this way of involving students in the humanities? Is there no place in the "blocks" of vocational-technical instruction for electives such as humanities, and how can we get students to elect them?

A. Example of a new certificate program for auto mechanics at Bakersfield College:
1. First column on certificate sheet: specific courses in automotive maintenance -- about 24 units.
2. Second column: other courses specifically related to the field -- 6 to 10 units.
3. Third column: suggested electives -- humanities, agriculture-environment, art and design, English, etc.
4. The program does not believe in the narrowness of auto mechanic training alone.

VII. Can or should we train someone -- in light of watergate -- in the narrowness of a profession or vocation alone? Isn't at least a specialized ethics with real application to a specific field needed?

A. Example: A medical ethics course for nurses and other health care professionals which tries to apply ethics to their fields rather than deal with ethics in the abstract or with ethical theories in general.
B. One person asked if there isn't an ethic of some kind in fixing a good weld or repairing a car, etc., and asked further if artistry is not also involved.
C. How can we prepare a worker to deal with such ethical problems as when his boss tells him to fix something but "unfix" something else? Can the usual philosophical theories help him here? He has a family to support, etc., so can he just quit or not do what the boss tells him to do? These are real moral problems, and it may be questionable whether the typical college level ethics course helps people to deal with them successfully.
D. Also, what about pride in work, etc.? Humanities should be involved here too.

E. Could a philosopher come into a vocationl-technical class for a few lectures a week in conjunction with the vocational-technical instructor?

F. Is it possible to work out a course load for a floating philosopher going from one class to another? This could also be a great way to sell the humanities to vocational-technical students in small doses.

G. Such loads probably could be arranged, but how would vocational-technical instructors and departments react to having a philosopher come in?

1. Vocational-technical instructors answered by saying come to us and tell us what you want to do and how you want to do it.
2. Another problem is counting such an arrangement or even special courses for vocational-technical students as general education. One social scientist feels that it is more of a specialized technical training course because courses of this type are limited to a small group of people rather than a cross-section, and they all have similar feelings and attitudes.

VIII. Difficulty of fitting humanities into packed vocational-technical programs.

A. The problem exists whether the program is short (Industrial education courses) or long (R.N.) programs.

B. Either program would still have to fit in the requirements for the A.A. degree if it's desired.

C. There are also requirements for the State board for nursing.

D. There is little or no room for elective or even required courses in the humanities because, for example, the R.N. program consists of 97 units for the A.A.

E. We can't provide students with everything, but if we offer them a course in ethics or aesthetics which fits with their vocational program, we may impress them more. We may do less than the usual required course but give them more in the long run -- hopefully they'll come back later for more humanities courses.

F. There are two alternatives:

1. We can infuse the humanities into a vocational-technical course.
2. We can have students elect a whole humanities course.
3. Vocational-technical and R.N. people say we have to do both.

G. We should put the emphasis on letting vocational-technical students do their thing while encouraging them toward an A.A. degree where they'll eventually have to have a humanities course.

H. Work experience courses are a good place to infuse ethics, etc., because there are required seminars which students must attend, and these can be related to problems on the jobs which students have.

I. Vocational-technical people offered some courses right on the job location of the workers with the following results:

1. After a semester, close to 70 of these workers were taking college courses other than what was being offered at work.
2. Before, the college had none of these people; after they offered these courses, they had 70.

IX. Ethics could be worked into these programs, but what about the rest of the humanities, e.g., aesthetics, literature?

A. First, you have to offer a program conveniently and provide the opportunity (e.g., moving a drama performance course and program from the day to the evening).
B. Secondly, you have to reorient instructors to the new idea of teaching evenings rather than days. Also, some instructors are intimidated by older students.
C. Maybe we need a course which is an enticement-into-humanities-course where we don't expect to do a lot, but merely to expose students to the humanities.
D. More dialogue is needed between vocational-technical faculty and other faculty members -- we need to strive for solutions on our own campuses in these areas.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: What is the Status of Humanities Courses for Ethnic Minorities and Women?

I. We should examine ourselves -- we are not only people in the humanities; we should also be humane.

   A. We should use positive language -- this should be one of our humane qualities.
      1. We should avoid terms such as "minorities"which can be offensive -- we are all or have been minorities at one time or another.
      2. We should examine the language of the conference itself. We talk about "man's inhumanity to man," "the ascent of man," etc.
      3. College students in a recent study tended to think that "man" means male -- we should rather use the terms "humans" or "human beings."

II. We should plan community events at our colleges to bring different people from the community on campus to have fun there.

   A. These could help us in the energetic recruitment of students.
   B. We should try to get students of all races, sexes, and religions.
      1. Interdisciplinary programs.
      2. Go where students are and "seduce" them with a combination of humanities course and whatever else is attractive to the student.
      3. Convert traditional courses.
         a. Teach the real thing but with a new title, a new flavor, a new package.
         b. Make it look like it really belongs to women, ethnic minorities, all of us.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S REPORT
Bernice O. Zelditch, Foothill College

I believe that the future of the humanities does lie in more cultivation of ethnic studies and women's studies. In addition, the future of ethnic studies and women's studies will be enhanced by a greater focus on the humanistic aspects of those fields. It seems that interest in ethnic studies is waning somewhat on college campuses, although still holding firm in certain fields; it seems that women's studies have not yet become firmly established on college campuses but will presumably suffer from a decline after an initial interest. Since the humanities are so essential for a liberal arts education, or indeed for any true education, and since we feel that ethnic studies and women's studies have so much to offer to Americans in the Bicentennial era, we discussed ways of revivifying, changing the tone of, or sustaining interest in ethnic studies and women's studies.

The near future, celebrating the American Bicentennial, should resurrect interest in ethnic studies because all Americans are descendants of those who came here from other countries, varying ethnic stocks, who are now amalgamating or living separately as Americans. Since this is so, we discarded the term "ethnic minorities" which was given to our discussion group, and we used instead "ethnic studies." We focused on ways to draw back the interest in Black studies, Chicano studies; approaches to stimulate interest in Asian-American studies and Native-American studies. Some of our notions are undoubtedly used now, some are more unusual. We suggested: festivals around the important dates of each ethnic group; emphasis on dance, art, music, literature, drama, and food at such festivals, with particular attention to ethnic crafts; the use of libraries as display areas for various ethnic contributions; weekend conferences sponsored jointly by local ethnic groups and the college, perhaps with grant money from the National Endowment for the Humanities; short conferences sponsored by the colleges and various religious groups, churches, temples, or synagogues; the introduction of more courses in the humanities emphasizing the contributions of ethnic stocks. To combat the common feeling that more courses and more festivals will merely dilute attendance, we could point specifically to colleges which had diminished total enrollment in one course, but had gained significantly in enrollment by offering several sections of the same course at different times or by offering similar courses at both on-campus or off-campus sites. As to the feeling that we had reached a saturation point in ethnic studies, a common feeling leading to despair, many of the group said that the Bicentennial and a new emphasis, such as reverence and celebration rather than political or ideological attack, would generate renewed interest. In addition, we might realize the facts of college life in an age of fast obsolescence of fads; one ethnic group might be temporarily supplanted by another, more fashionable group. For example, Black studies courses may have less enrollment, but at least on Foothill College's campus where a course in ethnic studies is mandatory for the A.A. degree, Irish-American literature had one section of over 60 students in the spring of 1974. Further suggested courses are: Literature of the Scots, Jewish-American Literature, Modern American Catholic Writers, and composition courses that use essays on ethnic themes as models.

Film series, such as those at Bakersfield or Foothill or De Anza, can attract students to study film and the contributions of Japanese, Polish, Russian, or Italian directors. Interdisciplinary courses, combining history, literature, and art, for example, can focus on Nineteenth Century France, or the ethnic composition of the college enrollment district, a successful venture at many regional history centers, such as the one at De Anza College. What has happened to the descendants of the original Mayflower passengers? This is a question that might well be pursued as the hardy group of white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants has become a minority, and occasionally a despised minority, in American life.

Women's studies courses are important also for re-vitalizing the humanities. We discussed ways of introducing women's studies on college campuses, from introductory strategies, to types of courses to offer, to maintaining interest after the initial flurry of attention, and the importance of emphasizing women's studies during the Bicentennial. After all, these studies can appeal to one-half of our population or more, being, as Carolyn Kizer once said, "merely the private lives/ of one-half of humanity." ("Pro Femina"). Opportunities await those who can unite several disciplines to form a course on the history of American women, including their political and economic importance; their writings; their arts and crafts; their reflection in the mass media and the arts. We also mentioned such common, well-known attractions as: celebration of International Women's Day; commemoration of the United Nations International Women's Year, 1975; festivals celebrating the contributions of women to the arts, literature, film, music, and crafts of all kinds; courses exploring the sex roles and imagery of both men and women; special attention to Black women and aging women; physical education courses for more health education and active sports for women; and such courses which unite philosophical analysis and linguistics as Images of Women in Philosophy, Sex Characteristics and the Speaking of English. Techniques such as role-playing, male-female team teaching, consciousness-raising groups, participatory democracy, and affirmative action ventures are all natural and valuable for women's studies.

By summarizing our group's discussion, I gain the advantage of being able to suggest a further way to combine these interests in ethnic groups and women's studies, by developing the field of children's studies. It is a natural field for college students and the larger community alike; college students look back nostalgically to their childhoods, and the larger community is involved with children in family or professional capacities. The celebration of Children's Day on June 1, or of family events during the year with special emphasis on children, promise to attract the community to the college campus. Children's art, music, literature, courses in the history of the concept of childhood, and children and the mass media intensify the impact of courses on ethnic groups and women's studies, for American children come from all ethnic stocks and half of them, at least, are female. Working with children's studies also gives us another, redeeming opportunity to show America and Americans the contributions of all our peoples to our children, and to point out how our children can be better and happier and more creative than we are. Working in children's studies is challenging, and working with children is fun -- two fine motives for those in the humanities.

Our goals, those of strengthening the humanities in the future, and of maintaining interest in ethnic studies and women's studies, can flow together. We can attract the community to the campus, promise them stimulation, and then try to fulfill our promise with integrity, academic excellence, creativity, and enjoyment.

DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTION: What New Directions Will and Should the Humanities Take?

I. In planning for new directions, we still must consider the problems we have with both the writing and non-writing students.

   A. We need to stimulate in every student both the capability to experience meaningfully and the capability to articulate their experience. We won't be doing our jobs as humanities teachers until we do this.
   B. We should fill in the lacks which students might have in either direction.
   C. We should also remember that students can be verbal even though nonwriting.

II. Experiential learning vs. learning in the traditional sense of the classroom type of rational analysis and synthesis.

   A. Students can go to a museum and go up to a Rembrandt and see what a real painting is really like.
   B. We want to encourage this experiential type of learning as much as possible.

III. Types of courses being offered:

   A. Individual instruction -- can we devise better ways to work in administering tutorials? San Jose State College has tutorials in the humanities.
   B. Compton College offers a course called, "China, Africa, and the West" for three units with many teachers.
   C. Themes courses are also in favor.

IV. Each of us with our own capabilities and understanding has to figure out what his potentials are in a given context.

   A. Local problems which have to be dealt with:
      1. Money.
      2. The philosophy of the community and the school district.
      3. College administration is some cases.
   B. We need to use TV and radio media to get the humanities injected into community problems and do it on a community level.
   C. We should use TV, however, not in a strict lecture form where the camera focuses on one person, but rather use images, etc., to get our ideas across.

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